News Release
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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT UNVEILS NEW HEALTH CARE SERVICE FOR ONTARIANS

MedsCheck Offers Free, One-On-One Pharmacist Review Of Clients' Medication

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is expanding medicare by launching a brand new service called MedsCheck for all Ontarians who take three or more medications. MedsCheck is a free service that provides people with an opportunity to consult with their pharmacist for up to 30 minutes once a year to review the medications they are taking, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"This is the first program of its kind in Canada and it will ensure that people are getting the most from their medications by taking them properly and safely," said Smitherman. "We recognize pharmacists for the valuable role they play in patient care – that is why we have created the MedsCheck program."

Under the MedsCheck program all Ontarians who take three or more prescription medications for chronic conditions can receive an annual one-on-one review of their medications from a pharmacist.

"We are delighted the government is supporting the MedsCheck program as it will better utilize the skills and abilities of pharmacists as front-line health care providers to deliver medication related patient care," said Ken Burns, Chair, Ontario Pharmacists' Association. "The MedsCheck involves the pharmacists' assessment of a comprehensive medication list. This helps patients, pharmacists, physicians and other health care providers work together to improve patient outcomes."

MedsCheck is being provided to Ontarians as a result of the *Transparent Drug System for Patients Act, 2006* passed in June, 2006. The Act allows for the implementation of the government's plan to create a stronger more effective and transparent drug system for everyone in Ontario.

This is just one more example of how, working together, Ontarians have achieved results in better access to drug treatment for families. Other initiatives include:

- Passing the Transparent Drug Systems for Patients Act (Bill 102) to ensure improved patient access to drugs and better value for money;
- Creating a new Pharmacy Council that gives pharmacists the opportunity to be involved in developing pharmaceutical related policies;
- Approving funding for 67 new drugs on Ontario's Drug Benefit Formulary since the passage of Bill 102 on October 1, 2006.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty's government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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